THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Increase in domestic price rise has been mainly due to inflation in some food articles mainly rice, tur dal and edible oils witnessed globally due to inadequate supplies in relation to demand, diversion of food grains to bio-fuel and animal feed and, production losses due to inclement weather conditions. Some Increase in prices of some food articles such as rice and pulses in the country is also on account of hike in Minimum Support Price (MSP), bonus and decline in domestic production. Government is closely monitoring movement in prices of essential commodities such as wheat, pulses & edible oil and has responded by taking a series of measures such as (i) augmentation of availability of wheat through imports and banning export of wheat; (ii) protecting vulnerable sections of society through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY); (iii) reduction in Customs duty on import of pulses to zero; (iv) banning export of pulses; (v) initiating imports of pulses through the State agencies such as NAFED, PEC Ltd., MMTC and STC; (vi) directing Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to import edible oils and to augment edible oils availability in the domestic market; (vii) reducing import duty on crude sunflower oil, crude palm oil (CPO) and Soya oils; (viii) as a matter of abundant caution, delisted all contracts of wheat, rice, tur and urad from commodity futures Exchanges.

(c) and (d) As per the GDP estimates at constant prices (base 1999-2000) released by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the growth rate in GDP of trade sector as a whole has been estimated at 8.1 % during the year 2005-06. Separate official estimates of rate growth of the share of retail sector and organized retail in GDP are not available. No studies have been conducted by the Government to assess whether the increase in organized retail trading added momentum to the price rise.

Rise in prices of essential commodities

838. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI MAT1 SUPRTYA SULE:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent past saw a continuous rise in price of essential commodities;

(b) if so, the reason therefor and the details thereof in comparison to the price of essential commodities from May, 2004 to January, 2008;

(c) the steps initiated by Government to control the price rise and also to affect the impact of price on consumers;

(d) whether Government is considering to strengthen the PDS system and expand it in the view of steep price hike; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) There has been no continuous increase in Prices of essential commodities. While comparing the prices of essential commodities from May, 2004 to January, 2008 for 4 Metros, it has been observed that retail prices of sugar had